THE FOURTH DAY.

Monday, the 14th March, 1932.

The Assembly met again at 11-30 A. M. on Monday, the 14th March, 1932, the Dewan presiding.

54. The Public Works Department and the needs of the public.

MR. N. KOCHUPILLAI KAIMAL (*Shertallai taluk, Group II*) first gave expression to the feelings of loyalty and devotion to His Highness the Maha Raja and the Ruling Family.

Passing on to his subject, he said that the Public Works Department was indifferent in attending to the urgent needs of the public. The Department should pay greater attention to public works in rural areas particularly to irrigation works. The public suffered much on account of the indifference on the part of the authorities in inspecting the means of communication in the State. The authorities should not rest contented with inspecting places accessible by cart roads alone, but should study the conditions of rural areas lacking in means of communication.

The policy of allowing budgeted allotments to lapse should be discontinued. The amounts annually budgeted under public works should be equitably distributed among the several taluks. The needs of a taluk might not be proportionate to the amount of revenue collected therefrom. It would be inequitable if even the small needs of a taluk with a good revenue collection were not attended to.

The Public Works Department should be made responsible to the Central Road Board in the matter of the distribution of the budget grant. Since the taluk representatives were members of the Board, it would be possible to allot the budget grant to the various Divisions with due regard to the needs of each taluk. The arrangement would also be conducive to the efficient working of the District Road Boards.

Special allotments should be made every year in the budget for public works in the taluks of Shertallai, Vaikam and Parur, which were lacking in facilities of communication and irrigation. Mr. M. E. Watts, while he was the Dewan of the State, had expressed the opinion that a special officer should be appointed for attending to the development of the means of communication in the Shertallai taluk. While the taluks of Shertallai, Vaikam and Parur had an area of 117 sq. miles, 114 sq. miles and 112 sq. miles, respectively, and a population ranging between 100,000 and 200,000 in each, the length of means of communication was only 44 miles of metalled roads, 70 miles of village roads and 9 miles of canals in the Shertallai taluk, 58 miles of metalled roads, 48 miles of village roads and 7 miles of canals in the Vaikam taluk and 37

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miles of metalled roads, 80 miles of village roads and 7 miles of canals in the Parur taluk. As regards revenue, the average annual income from the Arukutti Chowkey alone amounted to Rs. 10 lakhs. While urging the need for improving the means of communication in his taluk, the member wanted to express the gratitude of the people of the taluk towards the Government for opening the Shertallai-Arur road.

Lastly, the member suggested that the following changes be made in the constitution and working of the Road Boards:—

(i) The Road Boards and the Irrigation Boards be amalgamated.
(ii) The proceedings of the Road Boards be conducted strictly in accordance with the rules for the same.
(iii) The works recommended by the Road Boards be promptly executed.
(iv) The decisions of the Central Board be communicated to the members of the District Boards.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Kochupillai Kaimal, I shall be very glad to convey to His Highness the sentiments of loyalty to which you have given expression.

Your suggestions for the improvement of the Public Works Department will be communicated to the Chief Engineer, and, if any specific cases of hardship or grievance are brought to notice they will be enquired into, and, if possible, remedied.

The present procedure is to distribute the budget allotment throughout the State, as far as possible, in accordance with the importance and urgency of the works. At the same time, an attempt is made to give more money to those taluks which are backward both in irrigation and in communications.

I do not think it will be possible or workable to make the Public Works Department responsible to the Central Road Board, nor will it be possible to amalgamate the Road Boards with the Irrigation Boards. Their functions are quite different.

I am told that the proceedings of the Road Boards are conducted in accordance with the rules, and that the works recommended by them are executed as soon as possible as funds permit.

The decisions of the Central Board will be communicated, in future, to the District Boards.

55. Public Health with special reference to the Tuckalai Hospital.

MR. K. M. KESAVAN TAMPI (*Kalkulam taluk, Group I*) said that the two essential requisites for the maintenance of public health were firstly, the grant of necessary medical aid after proper diagnosis of the diseases and secondly, the preventi on of diseases by the timely carrying out of preventive measures. The first of these functions was entrusted to the Government medical institutions in the State. But the administration of these institutions was far from satisfactory. The condition of the Government hospitals and dispensaries had become

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